

DIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES: MARCH 12, 2009

The regular monthly meeting of the Diversity Council was held on Thursday, March 12, 2009, in the Knudsen Training Room, located on the first floor of the Jessie Parker Building in Des Moines, Iowa. The meeting was called to order by Chair Preston Daniels at 2:37 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Nancy Berggren, Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise (DAS-HRE)
Preston Daniels, Employee and Family Resources, Chair
Renee Hardman, Bankers Trust, Co-Chair
Shirley Hicks, Iowa School for the Deaf, Retired
Reginald Jackson, Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
Robin Jenkins, DAS-HRE
Miguel Moreno, Department of Transportation
Walter Reed, Jr., Department of Human Rights
Jonathan Thorup, Department of Public Safety
Miriam Tyson, Iowa Department of Economic Development
Dinh VanLo, Tai Village, Inc.
Ray Walton, Department of Administrative Services (DAS)
Stephen Wooderson, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Larew, Governor's Office (IGOV)
Alba Perez, Greater Des Moines Partnership
Ralph Rosenberg, Iowa Civil Rights Commission

DESIGNEE Syeta Glanton, IGOV, for Jim Larew

OTHER ATTENDEES

Tracey Bradley, DAS-HRE
Julie Bussanmas, Attorney General's Office
Susan Churchill, DAS-HRE, responsible for taking meeting minutes
Ronnie Cyrus-Jackson, Department of Natural Resources
Jesus Estrada, DAS-HRE
Katie Ervin Carlson, Concerned Citizen
Tomika Greene, DAS-HRE
Darlene Greenfield, Department for the Blind
Senta Hawkins, DAS-HRE
Minnie Mallard, Department of Elder Affairs
Venise McCown, IVRS
Donna Scarfe, Deaf Action Center, Interpreter for Shirley Hicks
Bev Schmeling, IVRS
Bill West, DAS-HRE
Others may have been present who did not sign in.

AGENDA ITEMS *The Council did not follow the agenda items in the order listed.*

- I. Opening Remarks – Preston Daniels.
- II. Discuss the Status of the Council's Work for 2009.
 - A. At last month's meeting, the Subcommittee wrote its report as a "status report" for the Council; however, some Council Members believed that the report should contain more specific recommendations for Governor Culver.
 - B. Preston Daniels wrote six recommendations as a starting point for the Subcommittee to "flesh out."
 1. The Council will discuss this issue again in April 2009.
 2. A final list of recommendations will be given to Governor Culver.
 - C. Miriam Tyson asked Council Members to email any suggestions for recommendations to her; she will also use them for the *Report to the Governor*, which is due by June 30, 2009.
- III. Review and Approval of Minutes of February 12, 2009.
 - A. No corrections or additions.
 - B. Minutes approved.
- IV. New Business – The Council had no new business to discuss.
- V. Discuss Meeting Schedule for 2009: Monthly or Quarterly?
 - A. The Council discussed different options for their meetings:
 1. Create an Executive Council that would meet quarterly and various subcommittees could meet more frequently.
 2. Meet quarterly and call additional emergency meetings, if necessary.
 3. Meet every other month.
 - B. Due to the amount of work that still needs to be completed, the Council decided:
 1. It will not move to quarterly meetings.
 2. It will continue meeting each month until June.
 3. In June, it will revisit the idea of meeting bi-monthly.
- VI. Subcommittee Reports
 - A. Public Forum Subcommittee – Miriam Tyson spoke on behalf of the Subcommittee.
 1. Suggested format for the Public Forum:
 - a. A Diversity Council meeting – one hour.
 - b. A question and answer portion for the public to ask questions of Council Members – 45 minutes.
 - c. A "diversity dialogue" to address such issues as parity in the State of Iowa, gender, salary, veterans, foreign employees, generational differences, or ethnicity – 45 minutes.
 2. Suggested location: Des Moines or Ames, beginning in the late afternoon or early evening.
 3. In a past meeting, members of the public volunteered to help plan the Public Forum, so Miriam Tyson will contact them for their input before submitting a final proposal to the Council.
 - B. Diversity Training for Entire State Workforce – Nancy Berggren spoke on behalf of the Subcommittee.
 1. The week of March 9 is the "trial week," in which all DAS employees are attending Diversity Training.
 2. Council Members are encouraged to attend and provide feedback.
 3. Next week, the Diversity Training will be rolled out to all state agencies in 750 individual 3.5-hour sessions.
 4. Steve Wooderson stated that the energy level of the instructors will be the key to successful sessions.

5. Renee Hardman suggested promoting Diversity Training in DAS newsletters.
 6. Preston Daniels requested for next month's meeting a compilation of employee feedback scores from Diversity Training sessions.
 7. Ray Walton asked Nancy Berggren to provide a monthly report of how many employees from each agency have attended Diversity Training.
- C. Referral System – Robin Jenkins reviewed the Subcommittee's draft proposal on how to administer the Referral System, as mandated in Governor Culver's Executive Order Four.
1. *As this is a preliminary report, it will not be placed on the Diversity Council's website.*
 2. The preliminary report stated that the "Referral Program will be administered as one element of the DAS statewide recruitment initiative, which emphasizes an enterprise approach to recruitment through branding and interagency collaboration in order to achieve and maintain a well-qualified and diverse workforce."
 3. Some Council members voiced concerns that the Program did not go far enough.
 - a. Reginald Jackson stated that the Program needed more accountability from hiring managers and asked if it could be called a "**Diverse** Referral System."
 - b. Preston Daniels questioned how the Referral System could be directly related to diversity; he stated that if hiring managers are accountable for interviewing minorities, then they may use the Referral System as an applicant pool.
 4. Nancy Berggren stated DAS would do some more research and report back to the Council at the next meeting.
- D. Best Practices Subcommittee – the Subcommittee had nothing to report.
- E. Persons with Disabilities Subcommittee – the Subcommittee had nothing to report.

VII. Public Comment

- A. Venise McCown, an intern at Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation, asked the Council to keep in mind that some individuals have "hidden disabilities" and they should not slip through the cracks in the new Referral System.
- B. Minnie Mallard, Department of Elder Affairs, encourages interns to volunteer 180 hours; she requested that the Council devise a way to add interns to the Referral System.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- I. New Business
- II. Discuss Status of Council's Work for 2009
- III. Subcommittee Reports
- IV. Public Comment

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, April 9, from 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. in the Knudsen Training Room, located on the first floor of the Jessie Parker Building, 510 East 12th Street, Des Moines, IA.